



*** For Immediate Release ***

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Multiple Agencies Come Together to Address Street Racing

King County: In response to the increased illegal street racing and street/freeway takeover activities across the region, and inherent recklessness of those in attendance the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and multiple other police agencies throughout the Puget Sound region have come together to focus on this important public safety issue. In early 2021 multiple King, Pierce, and Snohomish county police agencies came together and coordinated their efforts to respond to, and investigate illegal street racing related incidents in the region. In addition to law enforcement collaboration, local municipal and county prosecutors have voiced their support and dedication to improving public safety in responding to this significant public safety issue.

Since early March, investigators from the Tacoma and Kent Police Departments, the Washington State Fusion Center, and the WSP have all worked together to identify and arrest multiple suspected racers, and forwarded over 220 different charges against 29 different people in relation to these incidents. These charges range from Reckless Driving, Reckless Endangerment, Disorderly Conduct, and Malicious Mischief all the way up to Vehicular Assault. Charges have been forwarded on suspected organizers, drivers and spectators who contribute to these events.

This problem is not new, nor is it unique to our region. In fact, this is a trend seen in many large cities across the country. But with it has come repeated instances of this reckless and irresponsible behaviors leading to serious injuries of those involved in the racing activities and the bystanders watching alike. It is a unified goal to bring attention, enforcement, and an end to the reckless behavior that has resulted in multiple fatal and serious injury incidents in relation to street racing events. These joint efforts and collaboration on the part of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors across the region will continue to be dedicated towards street racing as long as it continues to be a nuisance and danger to the public, as well as an inconvenience to those motorists impacted by this behavior.

Captain Ron Mead, commander of field operations for the WSP in District 2 (which encompasses all of King County), stated "This regional problem exceeds the ability of any single law enforcement agency to address it alone. By working together we hope to bring these unsafe and illegal behaviors that pose significant risks to those involved, bystanders, and uninvolved motorists to an end. Through coordinated efforts, better use of resources, and collaboration with local prosecutors' offices, participants in this dangerous activity will be held accountable for the betterment of public safety."

Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Stephen A. Herschkowitz, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office added, "The King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office is committed to helping protect the safety of our communities' streets by working closely with WSP and other county agencies for this special emphasis. While sometimes glamorized, reckless racing and drifting outside appropriate venues is extraordinarily dangerous. Recently, several people in our county have been severely injured, and one has died, as a result of these

illegal street-racing activities. Our office is proud to provide legal assistance to our law-enforcement partners as part of this emphasis team.”

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